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The Friday Letter

Vol. 6 No. 7

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On the Hill



On April 6, Associate Administrator Sonia Crow testified before the Subcommittee on Human Resources of the House Committee on Education and Labor. The subject of the hearing was the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act.

The following is a summary of Ms. Crow's testimony.

- Ms. Crow emphasized that USDA's role in the Nutrition Program for the Elderly (NPE) is limited solely to providing commodities or cash in lieu of commodities for meals served according to a set rate of reimbursement specified in the Older Americans Act.
- USDA has no involvement in operating or managing the NPE. It makes policy decisions only related to meal reimbursement. The Administration on Aging of the Department of Health and Human Services holds primary responsibility for this program.
- When USDA first became involved with NPE, the program was an outlet for surplus foods and price-support commodities. Today, however, about 95 percent of USDA's contribution is in the form of cash.
- Ms. Crow discussed the Administration's grant proposal, delivered to the Congress on March 24, 1987, to simplify program funding through the use of a fixed yearly grant. The proposal would allow state and local agencies to know at the beginning of the fiscal year how much

funding they would have for the entire fiscal year.

- While advocating the need for a yearly fixed grant, Ms. Crow pointed out that USDA has also initiated efforts to increase the use of commodities in NPE by (1) lowering the level for receiving bonus commodities in NPE from 50 to 20 percent, and (2) entering into a cooperative agreement with the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs to encourage elderly congregate feeding sites to use commodities.

-Story by Frank Ippolito
Office of Governmental Affairs

National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition

John Magnarelli, Special Nutrition Programs director in NERO, was recently named as the Departmental Representative to the National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition. Magnarelli replaces Andrew Hornsby.

The next meeting of the National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition is planned for June 2-4, 1987, at the Days Inn in Crystal City in Arlington, Virginia. The meeting will be devoted primarily to a discussion of the Department's response to the Council's recommendations contained in the 1986 biennial report to the President and the Congress as well as current program issues.

4/15/87

CHAMP To "KO" 8-Bit

FNS released the Computer Hardware Acquisition and Modernization Program (CHAMP) request for proposal (RFP) to the industry on March 27. A total of 147 companies requested the RFP. CHAMP is based on the agency long-range IRM plans for 1985 and 1986, and includes at least one other large ADP hardware acquisition which is scheduled for 1989.

The current RFP includes new workstations and superminicomputers for headquarters and all regional offices, with delivery scheduled to begin in the fall of 1987 and extend into late 1988. One immediate effect of the installation of the new workstations, in addition to the advanced technology, will be the elimination of all 8-bit microcomputers installed in 1983-1984.

The deadline for vendors to submit bids on the CHAMP proposal is May 8, 1987. Plans call for the contract to be awarded and signed by September 1987 and delivery to begin 60 days later.

Arrangements are now being made with headquarters and regional offices to prepare for the delivery and installation of the hardware, including printers, plus additional software packages and ADP furniture.

In addition, an extensive training program is being developed that will provide training to different levels of employees to use the new equipment.

Thanks, Secretaries!

National Secretary's Week will be the week of April 20. National Secretary's Day is April 22. Cards, lunches, and other thoughtful gestures are always appreciated, as are those much-needed pats on the back for jobs well done throughout the year.

-Article by Mary Morris
Public Information Staff

MPRO Spreads Nutrition

MPRO staffer Stella Nash, a Special Nutrition Programs nutritionist, did her part in the local Denver media as part of National Nutrition Month observances in March.

Nash was interviewed on a Denver television talk show, appeared on Denver radio, and was quoted in the Denver Post as a result of her participation in a symposium sponsored by the Dairy Council. The symposium focused attention of health professionals on how to reduce the risk of life-threatening diseases in the black population.

She pointed out that good nutrition can generally improve health and can, for example, lower the risk of hypertension which is prevalent among blacks. Salt reduction can help 70 percent of the black community who will have mild to moderate high blood pressure by the age of 65.

-Story by Joanne Widner
MPRO Public Affairs Staff

ERRATUM

In the March 27 issue of The Friday Letter, it was inaccurately reported that Acting Administrator Kondratas coauthored a new book entitled, "A New Consensus on Family and Welfare." Although she did not coauthor the book, she was initially a member of the working seminar at American Enterprise Institute whose deliberations formed the basis of the book. Ms. Kondratas has coauthored a new book with Stuart Butler on social policy reform scheduled to be published by Free Press Macmillan in the fall of 1987.

Assistant Regional Administrators Meet

An Assistant Regional Administrators meeting was held during the week of March 2. The meeting took place at FNS headquarters and was the first time in approximately 4 years that the ARA's had a chance to personally discuss a number of issues that affect their operations, such as the future role of the field offices. Also discussed were the Long-Range IRM Plan, renewed emphasis on quality control and its effect on field workload, as well as the Violation Prone Evaluation Review (VIPER) System—its purpose and impact on retailer/wholesaler operations.

All the participants agreed that the meeting was the perfect forum, and that they gained creative ideas for managing field operations.



Pictured (left to right) are Brian Allison (MPRO); Priscilla Schmitz (SWRO); John Webster (PI); Karen Howard (WRO); Don Arnette (SWRO); Len Mart (MWRO); John Ghiorzi (NERO); Louis Mathis (SERO); Pat Cumisky (MARO); Gail Brady (MPRO); and Ralph Picone (MARO)

-Story by Mary Pat Stephenson,
Office of Regional Operations
Photo by Paul Rowen, Public
Information Staff

"Ag Reporter" Has New Editor



The "Ag Reporter," a newspaper published monthly by the USDA Welfare and Recreation Association, has a new editor—our own Gene Vincent of the Public Information Staff.



Gene, an Oklahoma farm boy, came to Washington, D.C., in 1965 as press secretary to a congressman from Oklahoma. In 1967 he joined FNS (formerly the Consumer and Marketing Service) as a public information specialist, and is currently a public affairs specialist in FNS' News Branch.

Before coming to Washington, Gene was editor of the "Guymon (OK) Daily Herald," editor of the "Salmon (ID) Recorder-Herald," and editor and publisher of the "Montezuma (KS) Press."

Gene is the father of four children, and resides in Montgomery County.

-Photo by Paul Rowen
Public Information Staff

Food Programs Participation Update

Following are preliminary estimates of participation in the Federal-State food assistance programs for the month of January with comparisons to the previous month and to the same month of last year.

	<u>Jan. 1986</u>	<u>Dec. 1986</u>	<u>Jan. 1987 2/</u>
<u>Food Stamp Program: 1/</u>			
People participating (mil.)	19.5	19.2	19.3
Value of bonus coupons (\$ mil.)	886.7	889.2	888.8
Average bonus per person	\$ 45.40	\$ 46.26	\$ 46.03
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	977.7	985.6	985.2
<u>National School Lunch Program:</u>			
Number of schools participating (thous.)	89.9	89.6	89.6
Children participating (mil.)	23.6	24.3	24.1
Children reached with free or reduced price lunches (mil.)	11.5	11.8	11.7
Percentage of lunches served free	41.8	41.5	41.9
Percentage of lunches served at reduced price	6.7	6.8	6.8
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	331.4	278.8	335.2
<u>School Breakfast Program:</u>			
Number of schools participating (thous.)	35.2	36.8	36.8
Children participating (mil.)	3.4	3.6	3.6
Percentage of breakfasts served free or at reduced price	88.6	88.3	88.5
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	40.9	39.0	44.8
<u>Child Care Food Program:</u>			
Number of meals served in centers (mil.)	36.2	33.3	34.6
Number of meals served in homes (mil.)	21.8	23.9	23.8
Percentage of all meals served free	78.1	78.0	78.1
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	42.0	42.4	43.1
<u>Special Supplemental Food Program (WIC):</u>			
People participating (mil.)	3.3	3.4	3.4
Food cost (\$ mil.)	105.6	110.0	110.7
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	130.9	137.3	141.5
<u>Commodity Supplemental Food Program:</u>			
People participating (thous.)	143.9	135.7	137.6
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	2.6	2.5	2.6
<u>Food Distribution to Indians and Needy Families:</u>			
Number of projects in operation	104	106	106
People participating (thous.)	148.0	143.3	148.3
Total program cost (\$ mil.)	4.1	4.3	4.2
<u>Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program:</u>			
Total USDA cost (\$ mil.)	69.8	68.4	73.8

1/ Puerto Rico has been excluded from all months.

2/ Data collected as of March 25, 1987.

State Directors Meet in Dallas

FNS, other Agriculture Department agencies, and more than 60 representatives of Federal, state, and local agencies met in Dallas recently to seek ways to improve the food distribution program.

Representatives of school lunch, child nutrition, and agencies on aging from all five Southwest states, along with commodity distribution staff and local food service directors, worked for three days to identify problems and concerns, as well as to discuss recommendations presented at last December's meeting on special commodity initiatives.

Under the direction of Hap Pullium (below), SWRO director of special nutrition, the participants received a total overview--from the time the specifications are written until the local agencies get the commodities.



Eddie Kimbrell, deputy administrator for commodity services at the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) (below left), and Robert Sindt, assistant deputy administrator for commodity operations at the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) (below right), explained their agencies' responsibilities and addressed concerns on surplus removal and price support. Jerry Perkins, chief of the processed commodity division at ASCS, talked about the Kansas City office and its role in getting commodities to the various agencies.



Alberta Frost, director of food distribution division (FDD), and Dale Wingo (FDD) discussed FNS' role in food distribution. They were followed by speakers from Food Safety and Inspection Service who explained their involvement in the commodity program.

In addition, state and local representatives led discussions, and the Texas Advisory Council attended most of the sessions prior to holding their own meeting.

-Story and Photo by Yves Gerem
SWRO Public Affairs Staff

Wellness Tip - Buckle Up

Wear your seat belt every time you get in a car. Protect yourself from hitting the steering wheel, dashboard, or windshield. Injuries caused by such an impact can be quite severe even at low speeds. The National Safety Council estimates that 18,000 lives could be saved if all drivers and passengers used seat belts at all times. Eighty percent of accidents happen at less than 40 mph. Drivers and passengers need protection on city streets as well as the beltway, and they need it a block away from home as well as 100 miles away. Seventy-five percent of accidents occur within 25 miles of home. So please, buckle up.

Job Opportunities

FNS is seeking to fill the following vacant positions. To be considered for one of them, submit an up-to-date SF-171, Personal Qualifications Statement, and current performance appraisal to the appropriate personnel office. If you're interested in a Headquarters position, apply to the Employment Branch, Personnel Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Alexan-

dria, Virginia 22302. Apply directly to Headquarters office for all GM-14 and 15 positions. For Regional positions, directly to the Regional Office. For details on the requirements for any of the positions listed below, consult the official vacancy announcement. These are posted on designated bulletin boards or you can get copies from the appropriate Regional or Headquarters personnel office.

Friday Letter Vacancy Listing By Vacancy Number

JOB TITLE	AREA OF CONSID.	SERIES	GRADE	CLOSING DATE	VACANCY NUMBER	OFFICE LOCATION
~ Clerk/Typist	(L)	GS-322	2/3/4	Open until filled	86-35	FNS
~ Secretary Typing	(A)	GS-318	4/5/6	Open Continuous	87-999	Various Locations
~ *Comp. Prgm. Analyst (Prom Pot to GS-12)	(A)	GS-334	9/11/12	Open until filled	87-16	IRMD
~**Program Analyst (Prom Pot to GS-13)	(A)	GS-345	12/13	04-20-87	87-34	OAE
~ Supvry Pers. Mgmt Sp (Prom Pot to GS-12)	(G)	GS-201	11/12	04-13-87	87-40	SWRO
~ Program Analyst (Prom Pot to GS-11)	(A)	GS-345	9/11	04-13-87	87-43	OAE
***Contract Specialist** (Prom Pot to GS-12)	(A)	GS-1102	9/11/12	04-27-87	87-45	ASD
~ Computer Prgmer/Anal. (Temp NTE 1 Year)	(A)	GS-334	5/7	Open Until Filled	87-46	IRMD
~ Compliance Clerk	(A)	GS-1802	5	04-20-87	87-48	FNP
~ Secretary Typing (Prom Pot to GS-7)	(G/L)	GS-318	6/7	04-24-87	87-49	CREEO
~ Per Actions Clk Typ (Prom Pot to GS-5)	(G/L)	GS-203	3/4/5	04/27/87	87-50	PED
~ Comptr Prgmr Analyst	(FNS H)	GS-334	12	04-17-87	87-52	IRMD Minn., MN

***4 POSITIONS

**Extended Closing Date

* 2 POSITIONS

FNS ~ Food and Nutrition Service

ASD ~ Administrative Services Division

IRMD ~ Information Resources Management Division

OAE ~ Office of Analysis and Evaluation

NTSD ~ Nutrition Technical Services Division

FNP ~ Family Nutrition Programs

PED ~ Personnel Division

CREEO ~ Civil Rights & Equal Employment Opportunity Division

SWRO ~ Southwest Regional Office, Dallas Texas

Area of Consideration

(FNS H) ~ FNS Headquarters

(FNS N) ~ FNS Nationwide

(G) ~ Governmentwide

(A) ~ All Sources

(L) ~ Local Commuting Area